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ARTICLE V.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE NEW ENGLAND
DIVINES.

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IV.

WE have hitherto considered the great writers of New England down to Hopkins severally. We have traced the operations of their minds under the influence of the new ideas which had begun to germinate and grow, but had attained no ripe and perfect result. It will be better from this point on to consider the development of their ideas with less reference to individual peculiarities, and mark how they advanced, substantially in entire agreement, to meet an attack from without upon this portion of their cherished faith. Till now they had opposed individual errorists, and often found them among their own proper leaders. Now a movement was initiated from without, was soon organized into a new denomination, the Universalist, and hence had its defined line of attack, and could be better estimated and more effectively opposed. The corporate character of the attacking force gave unity and solidity to the defence. We may therefore treat less individually the replies made by men who speak now more as members of one host opposing another. In one respect this controversy is less interesting than one could wish. It is too involved with other controversies to possess the piquant interest derived from concentrated attention to one great theme. But history follows the actual course of affairs, and derives her true attractiveness not

from the development of some ideal plan, but from the sense of faithfulness to facts which in the providence of God are designed to teach us some form of eternal truth. If then it is impossible wholly to distinguish the Universalist from the Unitarian Controversy, the affinity of Universalism with that feeble apprehension of human guilt which is characteristic of Unitarianism, will do something to put the nature of the doctrines opposed by the New England divines in clearer light. Let us turn then to

VI. THE UNIVERSALIST CONTROVERSY.

The first Universalist of America in the denominational sense of that term, was the Rev. JOHN MURRAY, who, born in 1741, came to this country in 1770.¹ As a theologian, he has no just claim to an independent consideration, since he derived his ideas from James Relly, of England, and remained a consistent Rellyan so long as he lived. We put first, therefore, the views of Relly.

I. JAMES RELLY.

Mr. Relly's views were set forth by himself in a book entitled "Union."² The occasion of the studies which led to the discovery and promulgation of the doctrine of Union, is said to have been the recurrence to Relly's mind of a question which he found himself unable to answer, viz., "Wherein is the justice and equity of one man's suffering death, yea, even the torments of Hell, for another?"³ The

¹ For an account of Mr. Murray see Eddy's "Universalism in America," a book to which I shall have frequent occasion to refer, and which is specially valuable for many extracts from books now exceedingly difficult to obtain.

² The edition before us is an American reprint of the original. The title runs as follows: Union; or, a Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and his Church. By James Relly. *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body, so also is CHRIST.* 1 Cor. xii. 12. BOSTON: Printed by EDES & SON for Benjamin Larkin at Shakespeare's Head, No. 46, Cornhill, Boston. (No date.)

³ *Ibid.*, p. xii.

answer was supplied by the idea of Union. We do not find this idea formally presented or philosophically deduced. Indeed, Rely was not the man either to perceive the propriety of this, or to perform it with success. His thought is, however, perfectly plain. He sets out from the doctrine of "the fall of Adam, and of the world in him."⁴ The union between Adam and his offspring was such "that his sin was their sin, and his ruin their ruin; whilst they, included in him, were in passivity, and he the active consciousness of the whole."⁵ "In like manner, Christ's righteousness is upon all his seed; by his single act, before they had any capacity of obeying after the similitude of his obedience, or of assenting to what he did or suffered. This manifests such a union to him, such an inclusion of the whole seed in him, as renders his condition theirs in every state which he passes through. Insomuch that his righteousness, with all the blessings and fruits thereof, is theirs, before they have known it, believed it, or ever were conscious of existence. Thus by the obedience of one, are many made righteous."⁶

This is the doctrine of salvation *en masse* in its extremest form. All men are saved simply because they are men, and possess all the holiness of Christ, and that without regard to faith or character. It is also a system of complete antinomianism. Rely is perfectly aware of this, and in his book teaches it all with the utmost frankness.⁷ The word believing or faith, as applied to the attitude of the Christian towards the gospel, always means regarding it as true;⁸ and

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 27. Rely's scheme is not properly a scheme of universal salvation, inasmuch as it provides only for the salvation of all *men*, leaving that of other spirits uncertain. It may be that only *men* are thus united to Christ. That Rely believed that there were lost spirits is evident from page 110, where he speaks of devils. Will they always remain devils? So far as we have seen, Rely does not answer this question.

⁷ Ballou uses the word "offensively" of Rely's method of presenting antinomianism. *Universalist Quarterly*, January, 1848.

⁸ See pp. 67, 72, 78, 90, 159, *et al.*

by the gospel he means principally the doctrine of Union. Evangelical faith he entirely rejects, with opprobrious comparisons. "Union with Christ before faith is true," he says, inasmuch "as the gospel is true before our believing."⁹ "But if it is not true until our believing and by means thereof, then doth believing make that a truth which was not a truth, and *faith creates its own object*, and then embraces it. This looks like the heathen idolatry, first making their gods, and then trusting in them."¹⁰ "Where the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice of Jesus to put away sin, and that *without any act of ours* either *mental* or external, is denied, it amounts to what the Scriptures call a *crucifying of the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame!*"¹¹ His indifference to character is as openly confessed. The Old Testament saints "were not the [good] men they are represented to be, their conduct and behavior considered, . . . but were so *in Christ.*"¹² His readers are actually urged, if in distress over sin and seeking repentance, not to strive for it, since Christ cried mightily unto God, "and," he says, "gives you *this* repentance"¹³ (italics Rely's). And in complete accord with this he rejects with expressions of contempt the doctrine of conversion and all its corollaries.¹⁴

It can scarcely be expected that such a doctrine should be supported by any arguments worthy of our consideration. They are, in fact, a tissue of absurdity and folly. Yet they had their influence, and gained a following, and our fathers were compelled to rebut them. We must, therefore, briefly review them. There seem to be the following positive proofs:—

I. The first is that *this Union is necessary to the harmony of the divine perfections.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 128.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 135.

Without Union it is impossible to maintain the truth that every man shall die for his own sin. "Such a union or relation between Christ and his church as gives him the right of redemption and brings him under that character which is obnoxious to punishment, is absolutely necessary that his suffering for sin might accord with the declarations and demands of truth."¹⁵

It is contrary, again, to justice to afflict the innocent. Hence there must be such a union as makes us suffer in his person, or else Christ's sufferings are unjust.¹⁶ It is also contrary to love. The argument here is mixed.

2. The second proof is from the Scriptures. Rely first presents a number of texts of Scripture, similar to these: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," (*sic*) Eph. v. 30; "That they may be one, even as we are one," John xvii. 22; together with many which do not seem to have the slightest natural connection with the topic, as *e. g.*, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 9.¹⁷

3. While explaining the *nature* of this union, Rely advances other arguments for it, some of which are quite fantastical, as *e. g.*, one from an analogy between Christ and his church, and Aaron and his garments. "But," he says, "as all who profess Jesus Christ understand not the Scriptures, nor the power of God, it is probable that this method may be ob-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁷ We add the entire list of proof-texts cited on pp. 13-18. Ps. cxxxix. 16; Eph. v. 30; 1 Cor. xii. 26, 12, 27; Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 22, 23; Col. ii. 10; Rom. xii. 5; Eph. ii. 16; v. 3, 32; Heb. ii. 11; Judges xvii. 22, 23; Jer. xviii. 4; Isa. lxvi. 7, 8; Col. ii. 11, 12; Gal. ii. 20; Ps. xlix. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Rom. vi. 6; Col. iii. 3; Rom. vii. 4; vi. 8, 11; Isa. xxvi. 9; Hos. vi. 2; 1 Pet. i. 3; iii. 21; Col. i. 21, 22; 2 Cor. v. 9; Rom. iv. 25; Eph. ii. 6, 5; Col. ii. 13; Eph. i. 3, 4; 1 John iii. 2; iv. 17; 2 Tim. i. 9; Eph. i. 6; Isa. xlv. 17; xxiv. 25; Jer. xxxiii. 16; xxiii. 6; 1 Cor. i. 2, 30; Matt. i. 23. We have preserved Rely's order, for we suppose it to have had an argumentative force in his mind.

jected unto, and the matter treated by many as fables of allegory."¹⁸

4. The vine and its branches is adduced; also
5. Membership of Christ's one body; and
6. The similitude of a building.

After these positive arguments come answers to objections. The first of these, to the objection that this doctrine tends to licentiousness (in modern English, license) and that the doctrine of rewards and punishments is overthrown, and man left with nothing to stimulate him to virtue; leaves the great point presented in the first part of the objection unanswered, or rather makes Rely's antinomianism clearer than ever. "But such an obedience [excited by fear,] is far from being compensate for the despight [*sic*] done thereby to the Spirit of grace, and dishonor to the crucified one."¹⁹

But not to delay longer upon this work, we will close our view of it with two extracts which equally show its substantial disregard of fairness in interpretation, and of facts:—

Unto the right understanding of the Scriptures it is necessary to know that they consist of two parts, letter and spirit, or law and gospel. Now the letter or law killeth, but the spirit or the gospel giveth life. And as this is useful to be known, so is it also, that we should be able to distinguish one from the other; else how doth it appear that we rightly divide the word of life? If the gospel be considered as . . . glad tidings to mankind . . . a fallen creature . . . what can be called good tidings unto a creature in this condition? Surely nothing short of that which tells him all is given, and that freely, without condition on his part because he can perform none.²⁰

All the warnings of the gospel are thus relegated to the domain of the law, and disposed of. Again:—

O what grace is this! that we, helpless worms, whose every word, work, and thought, is unholy, yea, in whom according to the strongest testimony

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37. Similar exegesis was characteristic of Murray. (See Eddy, Vol. i. p. 156.)

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 79. This passage is also interesting on account of the words next following those quoted above, which show that even Rely could not free his mind of the idea of retribution and of the propriety of it. He continues: "They shall sooner or later know [this]: *when all their works shall be burnt up, and they shall suffer loss.*"

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 82.

of our senses and reason there is [*sic*] yet found the motions, life, and love of sin, should have a right to reckon ourselves dead unto sin, dead unto what we feel the life of, dead unto what we yet feel the love of, dead unto what is yet stronger than we, . . . what an amazing reckoning is this! ²¹

Murray always preached upon the basis of this theory. A sketch of his views was given by Hosea Ballou 2d in the *Universalist Quarterly*, January, 1848. We quote the following summary :—

A few are elected to obtain a knowledge of the truth in this life, and these go into paradise immediately at death. But the rest, who die in unbelief, depart into darkness, where they will remain under terrible apprehensions of God's wrath until they are enlightened. Their sufferings are neither penal nor disciplinary, but simply the effect of unbelief. Some will believe and be delivered from their darkness in the intermediate state. At the general judgment, such as have not been previously brought into the truth will "come forth to the resurrection of damnation;" and, through ignorance of God's purpose, they will "call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them, etc." . . . Then the Judge will make the final separation, dividing the "sheep" or universal human nature, "from the goats," which are the fallen angels, and send the latter away "into everlasting fire."

We will introduce at this point a man who remained in the orthodox ministry all his life, but who appears before us in a posthumous volume in the light of a Universalist, and one much influenced, if not determined in his position, by the views of Relly. An actual historical link between the two men cannot be established. But inasmuch as Mr. Relly's views were well known in America through Mr. Murray, and our author especially claims to have read all the writers upon the subject, we shall credit Relly with an influence over him, though the disciple was in this case greater than his master. We refer to the Rev. Joseph Huntington, D. D., of Coventry, Connecticut, whose work appeared in 1796. ²²

II. JOSEPH HUNTINGTON.

Huntington's position in early life was that of Arminian-

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 112, 113.

²² The title of the book is *Calvinism Improved; or, the Gospel Illustrated as a System of Real Grace, issuing in the Salvation of All Men, etc.* New London, 1796. Pp. 331. 8vo.

ism, but he was subsequently led to adopt Calvinism. His modifications of this system were only those necessary to introduce the doctrine of Universalism. He clung close to the old theories of the atonement, refusing to follow the lead of the younger Edwards and others into certain modifications now known as the "New England theory."²³ His statements as to total depravity are also quite Calvinistic.²⁴ But he had been led by a gradual process to adopt the view that the promises of the gospel were meant to assure us of the salvation of every man, that this was the significance of the "good news," and that salvation would be conferred immediately upon death, without any period of punishment, or even of such darkness and suffering as Murray taught.

Huntington opens his discussion with the statement of an antithesis which he conceives to run through the entire Scriptures. He says:—

The two great doctrines we are taught to believe are, *first*, What is just and right for God to do with us, considered in our own personal character and desert. This I shall call the pure voice of justice to man, without regard to an atonement or a mediator. *Secondly*, What God will *in fact* do with mankind, as united to a mediator, and one with him by divine constitution, in a federal sense: Or how in very deed, God hath promised to deal with man, in that union with the second Adam: What his condition shall certainly be in this life and the life to come. This I call pure gospel; or tidings from God, which never could have been known but by his own revelation.²⁵

Justice, Huntington says, demands the eternal punishment of every sinner, and this is threatened in the law. He does not pretend that the word *αἰώνιος* signifies anything but eternal in the proper sense of that word. He says:—

All the learned know that this word, in the Greek, signifies an *age*, a *long period*, or *interminable duration*, according as the connected sense requires. This word with all its repetitions sometimes signifies no more than a long, limited time; ages of ages; and sometimes endless duration, when applied to the existence of Jehovah. But there is not the least need of any criticism on this word, or any other single word or phrase in the Bible. There are express propositions and assertions enough in the word

²³ Calvinism Improved, p. 94 ff.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

of God to exclude any possible termination of the misery of the damned, as well as to assure us in the plainest manner that mankind shall be damned.²⁶

At first mankind supposed that this threatened punishment would be actually inflicted upon them in person. But little by little the gospel was introduced into the world, by which we have learned that the punishment will not be inflicted upon us men, but will be borne only by our substitute, the Saviour. Thus there run through the Bible two distinct lines of statement, the voice of threatening, which speaks as justice demands, and the voice of mercy, which corresponds to what God actually has in store for the race. In Huntington's own words:—

I readily grant, if this distinction, which I would everywhere keep in view, between the voice of justice and that of mercy, the display of law and that of gospel, running through the whole word of God, is without foundation, my whole argument falls to the ground. So does the whole of divine revelation, for aught I can possibly discern after a most careful inquiry for many years. And (with awful reverence would I speak it) I am not able, without this distinction, to vindicate the holy Bible from many more flat contradictions than any other book I have ever read. But this distinction is the peculiar glory and mystery of divine revelation.²⁷

In explaining how this salvation is effected, Huntington begins with the doctrine of election. This he holds with true Calvinistic rigor, and founds upon it the foreknowledge of God. The divine election embraces the salvation of all men. "Whenever election . . . doth distinguish one person, or one community or description of persons from another, it never hath the least regard to anything *beyond the grave*: excepting a difference in degree of felicity." As to eternity, "God has one elect head and no more; and one elect body and no more. The elect head is BEN-ADAM, the *Son of Man*, in equal connection with all human nature. The elect body is all human nature."²⁸ Hence, whatever differences there are between men as to the time in which they

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

learn of their redemption, all are redeemed in Christ. "The divine purpose alike secures all men in Christ alone; in his union with and covenant for human nature, as a covenant for the people, and God's salvation to the ends of the earth; and by the exertion of his office of priest, prophet, and king, in equal extent with each other. In this way, I say, alike secures every part of human nature from any pain or sorrow in the world to come, and alike secures real happiness and glory to every one in that proportion of grace which infinite wisdom and goodness hath appointed."²⁹

So much for election. But the foundation of the election is in the atonement. Christ is strictly a substitute for us, all the modifications of Edwards being rejected. "The true doctrine of the atonement is in very deed this. A direct, true, and proper setting all our guilt to the account of Christ, as our federal head and sponsor, and a like placing his obedience unto death to our account."³⁰ Hence as the atonement was made for all men, their guilt is removed by it, and "by a true and proper imputation"³¹ its benefits are immediately communicated to the race. Huntington goes so far as to answer expressly the arguments which New England men were beginning to use, founded upon the idea that personal guilt and righteousness cannot in the nature of things be transferred. This is possible because property can be transferred, and all "men are God's property, absolutely and wholly so; and of consequence [!] all their doings are equally his property."³² Through their "union with Christ" the character of men becomes the character of Christ when he is to be punished for them, and then his obedience becomes their obedience, thus giving them salvation.³³ This is the Rellyan idea, and it is often expressed in phrases strikingly like Relly's.³⁴

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 83, 127, 171.

See, for example, pp. 55, 130, 133, 165, 183.

In conformity with these ideas faith is represented, in complete harmony with Rely, as consisting in believing that the declarations of the gospel are true. "All who hear the gospel are commanded to believe it; . . . their believing it does not make the foundation of their faith and salvation more true than it was before; but their faith is built on previous truth."³⁵ In Rely's words he says,³⁶ "Certainly, repentance, as an exercise in the human soul, does not *create its own object*, or lay its own foundation, any more than faith does, or hope, or joy, or any grace whatever." And then he goes on to say:—

The foundation of God hath the seal, not of alterations in creatures, but of his own eternal decree, and his knowledge of our salvation founded thereon. Let the mind of man, *at present*, be in what state it may, "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

If there could be any doubt, after these passages as to our author's meaning, it would be entirely removed by the two paragraphs immediately following that last quoted. They are:—

When all men are commanded everywhere to repent, no doubt saving, evangelical repentance is the thing commanded, and this we know is the exercise of a new heart, and implies union with Christ by regeneration, or a new creation in him. The very command implies that this is made sure, and all the benefits connected with it, as what Christ had laid a foundation for. The doctrine preached is only a piece of good news, founded in truth and certainty, as all other gospel doctrines are. The doctrine is an object of faith, as all other gospel doctrines are. It has a reasonable duty connected with it; which is common to all gospel doctrines.

When the doctrine of repentance is preached for the remission of sins, this remission is always considered as sure in Christ. Repentance as a fit temper of mind to receive it and enjoy the benefit, is also engaged by him who orders the doctrine to be preached. Christ considers all nations of the earth, and every human creature as reconciled to God by his blood, and God to them. What remains in the preaching of the gospel, is that they be brought to the knowledge, sense, and enjoyment of it, that it may have proper influence on their hearts.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

The subsidiary arguments brought we cannot dwell upon. They are derived from the nature of prayer, in which we pray for things we cannot expect, unless all men are to be saved.³⁷ The sentiments of mankind,³⁸ the form of baptism,³⁹ and the attributes of God⁴⁰ are all mentioned, as well as several other arguments. We pass to his decided rejection of Restorationism.⁴¹ After describing the theory, and mentioning the argument that it seems necessary that there should be some suffering in the world to come "to purge, humble, and subdue some sinners, and make them fit for a pure and spotless heaven," he proceeds to refute the idea. "All want purgation at the moment of death as really as any one." "A special work of Christ there certainly must be in death; or never one of the mere human kind can get to heaven. . . . We are very plainly taught in the word of God that every soul goes immediately after death into an eternal, fixed state." He mentions Enoch and Elijah, Lazarus and Paul, and other scriptural examples, and then adds:—

The utmost torment for a long period, even for ages of ages, could have no more effect in humbling sinners of the human than of the angelic nature. The devils are no better for their long-continued anguish and pain. Afflictions in this world do not make sinners any better; but are invariably only an occasion of their growing worse and worse, if the special, almighty energy of the Divine Spirit does not attend them. There is not the least intimation of the operation of the Spirit of God, or any means of grace in hell.....God has power enough to change the nature of all the devils there; but he has not told us he ever will do it, and we know of no saviour provided for them, or that ever will be.

We make room for only one more feature of the work, which is necessary, however, for a full understanding of the method in which Huntington would reconcile his doctrine with the words of Scripture. He repeatedly says that there is no statement in Scripture that any soul has actually been

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 200.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 202-208.

lost. To remove the objection that would be derived from Matt. xxv. 46, he adopts the following interpretation:—

In their Surety, Vicar, or Substitute, *i. e.*, in Christ, “the head of every man,” they go away into everlasting punishment, in a true gospel sense. In him they suffer infinite punishment, *i. e.*, he suffers for them.....The sufferings of Christ are eternal sufferings, just in the same way of reasoning that they are infinite.....It is only by personal union with Deity that either term will bear.⁴²

The final scene of judgment is thus explained:—

At the great and solemn day, characters shall be separated one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. God will show infinite approbation to the *character* of his own Son, the Son of man, as federal head in union with his redeemed creatures, placing *it* at his right hand; a phrase denoting approbation and honor. And he will manifest infinite wrath, indignation and vengeance against the real character of man, placing it at his left hand; which denotes the utmost detestation and abhorrence.....God.....never will hate anything in man but his bad character. In Christ he has no bad character, but one infinitely good. And God will bid all that sustain it, welcome to all the joys and glories of heaven.⁴³

In a similar way Judas is said not to have gone to hell.⁴⁴

We may stop in our view of Relyyanism with these representatives. We come to an altogether different style of Universalism in the next writer whom we shall consider, who with an Arminian theology united the theory of Restorationism. We mean

III. ELHANAN WINCHESTER.

Mr. Winchester was originally a Baptist, and after several changes of view settled down in the type of theology we are about to set forth. He is the next great leader among the Universalists after Murray, and his views came to prevail over those of his predecessor “except in the localities where Mr. Murray was personally laboring.”⁴⁵

Winchester founded his proof of Universalism upon orthodox premises. His statements as to the ruined condition of man without a Redeemer are as satisfactory as those of his

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴⁵Eddy, p. 381.

opponents. His Dialogues on Restoration⁴⁶ relate his conversion in the following language: "I was brought to resign myself into the hands of God, and thus I expressed myself: 'Lord, here I am, a poor helpless sinner; I resign myself into thine hands; take me and deal with me just as thou pleasest; I know thou canst do me no injustice.'"⁴⁷ The absolute need of repentance to forgiveness was thus a foundation stone of his system. None could be forgiven who did not repent. But the fundamental idea is that all *will* finally repent, some before death, in which case they will be received immediately to glory, others during the intermediate state before the Judgment, but finally, under the long and serious discipline of the "aionian" punishment, all who may have remained incorrigible by the means that have been used for their recovery before.

In the Dialogues we have an account of the "First Principles upon which the Doctrine of the Final and Universal Restoration is founded."⁴⁸ They are: (1) "God is the universal and only creator of all." (2) "The universal benevolence of the Deity, or the love of God to his creatures." (3) "Christ died for all." (4) "The unchangeableness of God." (5) "The immutability of God's counsels." (6) "God hath given all things into the hand of Christ, who hath declared that it is the Father's will that of all that he gave him, he should lose nothing." There is also an extended Scripture proof in the "Lectures on the Prophecies." Indeed, it should be said that Winchester's great reliance in the conduct of his discussion is the interpretation, however mistaken, of Scripture.⁴⁹

⁴⁶The Universal Restoration exhibited in Four Dialogues between a Minister and his Friend, etc. Litchfield, 1795. (Reprint.)

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 95 ff.

⁴⁹The title of this book is: A Course of Lectures on the Prophecies that remain to be fulfilled. The edition before us is that printed in Walpole, 1800. The principal texts employed are: The last two chapters of Revelation; Acts iii. 21; Gen. iii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, 15; 1 John iii. 8; Gen. xiii. 1-3, etc. Passages extending the mercy of God beyond his wrath, Ex. xx. 5, 6, etc.; Ps. xxx. 5; Phil. ii. 7-11; Rom. viii. 19-23; Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20; Phil. ii. 9.

We now take up certain points of detail, and first, the intermediate state. It is Winchester's chief argument for a state of conscious existence after death that otherwise there would be no opportunity for a change in the moral condition of men, and hence the plan of God to save all men would be lost.⁵⁰ He goes on to make among others the following remarks:—

If no possible change can take place after death, neither infants nor idiots can ever be happy, because they die without any ideas of God, Christ, or salvation, and indeed really without the knowledge of anything, or the habit or practice of goodness or virtue, or commission of any actual sin. The great, good, and pious Dr. Watts was so puzzled by this dilemma that he concluded that infants could not be saved, because they died without knowing anything of God, or the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, and without ever practicing virtue or goodness.....As for their being condemned to suffer the torments of hell to all eternity, he could not endure the idea of that..... therefore his great benevolence led him to conclude that all who died in infancy (except the infants of believers.....) would be annihilated.

It is thus evident that Winchester considered certain ideas that have been current in our own day. His thought was not perfectly clear, for upon another page⁵¹ he says that the standard of judgment will be "the light, knowledge, abilities, opportunities, etc., with which they are favored," and makes it evident that he distinctly includes those who live under different dispensations by remarking on the following page, that the judgment will be determined by the "different dispensations under which men lived," in immediate connection with mention of Greeks, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, etc. But in this passage "ideas of God, Christ, salvation," etc., are necessary elements of the case. And in the very passage quoted, by ellipsis the strange thought may be brought out that "neither infants nor idiots can ever be happy *because they die without. . . . commission of any actual sin!*"

The argument for an opportunity for change in the intermediate state is also conducted in connection with the now

⁵⁰Lectures, II., p. 68 f.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 57.

famous passage, 1 Pet. iii. 18-20.⁵² Winchester believes that "the soul of Christ as certainly went to hell, as he afterwards ascended to heaven." The object of this was not "to suffer," but it was a necessary part of the process of Christ; was to fulfill Scripture; was the progress of a mighty warrior; but its main purpose was that he might preach to the spirits in prison. Our author has already shown, as he thinks, that the preaching was not done by Noah, or in his time.⁵³ He continues:—

But if the question be asked, What did Jesus Christ the anointed Saviour preach, or proclaim to them? I answer, He proclaimed the gospel; of this we may be assured, for nothing can be more absurd than the idea that the merciful Redeemer went into the prison to proclaim condemnation and endless misery to them.....It would have been unworthy of his character to have descended into the lowest parts of the earth to increase the misery of the sufferers.

Some reasons for this distinguishing act of mercy are added by the writer. (1) The immense and inconceivable numbers that were destroyed by the flood, whom Winchester calculates to have been, at the rate of multiplication previously maintained, 17,179,869,184, "which is considerably more than eighteen times the supposed number of the present inhabitants of the globe." (2) They had sinned much longer than any others ever shall, and had doubtless acquired a hardness and obduracy beyond any of the human race, and were therefore fit subjects for our Saviour to try his mercy. (3) Their having been so long lying in painful imprisonment.

Hence Winchester concludes that "the Lord Jesus still continues to restore and redeem lost souls out of their state of sin and misery in the same manner as he did the inhabitants of the old world." As a specimen of the style of reasoning upon which he depended, I quote the following:—

I confess, respecting this last question, I have had great satisfaction from the testimony of a very particular friend of mine, and one of the best men that I am acquainted with, as far as I can judge. He was sick of a confirmed consumption, and in his own apprehension, and to the view of all

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 331 ff.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 77 ff.

around him, died and lay in that situation forty-one hours, and when he appeared to begin again to live, he found himself in his coffin, and the people assembled to his funeral. During the time of his absence, he beheld most wonderful things, and especially the restoration of a number of lost souls.⁵⁴

Winchester realizes that the day of judgment may seem superfluous upon his scheme, and is at some pains to overcome this difficulty. He says⁵⁵ that it is necessary (1) to put an end to the triumph of vice over virtue; (2) to take off the vail or mask, and show everything as it really is without disguise; (3) to reprove the wicked, and set their sins in order before their eyes; (4) to set forth the holiness, righteousness, and other perfections of the Deity, and the amazing hatefulness of sin, and its just desert; (5) to form the beginning of a course of correction which is to issue in the good of the criminals.

He justifies the belief that the punishment of the ages after the judgment will issue in the repentance of all souls upon the following grounds: "Punishment to a certain degree inflames and enrages in a most amazing manner; but continued longer and heavier, produces a contrary effect—softens, humbles, and subdues. . . . Some sins are so daring and presumptuous as to provoke God to threaten that they shall not be purged away in this life; and perhaps their malignancy may be so great that nothing that can be used here is able to subdue them. . . . Thus punishments are designed for the humbling of the proud: but if they fail of answering that purpose as administered in the present state, they will be continued and increased in future periods to such a degree as shall bring all down in due time."⁵⁶

The Dialogues are "chiefly designed fully to state and fairly to answer the most common objections that are brought against" the doctrine of universal salvation. We may profitably notice a few of these. The objection from the word "everlasting," employed in the Scriptures of future

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 381.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 38 ff.

⁵⁶Dialogues, p. 180.

punishment, is thought to be removed by showing that it is very often used of things which are not strictly without end. The force of the argument may be fairly stated in the form that because everlasting does not always mean strictly endless, therefore one can never prove that it does in any disputed case. No ponderous discussion of derivations is attempted, but the writer evidently leans to the idea that the proper meaning of *αἰών* is *age*. "What must be the meaning of the word in *many* places and what may be the meaning in *all*, is the true sense of the same."⁵⁷

This objection has its greatest force in connection with the passage Matt. xxv. 46. Winchester presents it in its full force, when he says: "Now, can you show me any passage of Scripture where the same word is applied to two different things, whose existence is the same, or the time of their continuance not alike?"⁵⁸ In reply, he quotes Heb. iii. 6: "He stood and measured the earth: he beheld and drove asunder the nations; and the *everlasting* mountains were scattered, the *perpetual* hills did bow: his ways are *everlasting*." And he goes on to say: "The question is, Are the mountains or the hills eternal in the same sense in which the ways of God are? . . . Thus, no solid argument can be drawn from the application of the same word to different things to prove that they shall be equal in their continuance, unless their nature be the same."

The objection from the tendency of character to permanence, he does not answer very pertinently. It involves, he thinks, the existence of two eternal principles, good and evil, a pagan doctrine which in Christianity we have learned to discard. This answer he derives from the "Everlasting Gospel" of Siegvolk.⁵⁹

But the final stage of New England Universalism was not reached in the writings of Winchester. It remained for,

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁹ See Eddy, Vol. i. p. 219.

another writer to change the prevailing form of doctrine from the Trinitarian basis upon which it had hitherto rested, to the Unitarian. This was the work of

IV. HOSEA BALLOU.

The book in which the revolutionary change wrought by Ballou was effected, was his treatise on the atonement. We shall restrict ourselves at this time to a sketch of this work.⁶⁰

Ballou's decisive, and among the Universalists, epoch-making work, sought to go to the foundation of the subject. Its title intimates as much as this, for though it was intended as a means of propagating the Universalist faith, and had its sufficient *raison d'être* therein, it dealt professedly with the atonement. It purposed to root out all the old theories and doctrines which were the foundation of the Orthodox scheme, and thus lead to the positions where Universalism was the only consistent conclusion. It is a system of doctrine culminating in Universalism. It is divided into three parts which deal respectively with sin, atonement, and the consequences of atonement. In general, the argument is straightforward, does not intentionally beg the question or misrepresent opponents, and seeks to remove objections before they shall occur, rather than answer them when they are forced upon the writer. Still, the limitations of Mr. Ballou's mind in the department of metaphysical and exact thinking are often very manifest.

The definition of sin with which he begins is this: "Sin is the violation of a law which exists in the mind, which law is the imperfect knowledge men have of moral good."⁶¹ The "legislature" which prescribes the law to all moral beings is "the capacity to understand." Since this is finite, "sin in its nature ought to be considered finite and limited, rather than infinite and unlimited, as has by many been

⁶⁰The edition before us is that of Dr. Miner. The title runs: *A Treatise on Atonement.* By Hosea Ballou. With an Introduction by A. A. Miner. Fourth Edition. Boston, 1882.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 41.

supposed."⁶² To the proof of the proposition that sin is a finite evil, Ballou devotes considerable space. He thus designed to meet squarely one of the strong positions of his opponents. He directly opposes Edwards' arguments in fact though he does not mention him by name⁶³ when he sets up against the idea of obligation measured by the being to whom it is due, viz., God, this idea of a finite "legislature," the mind of man. How important he deemed this point may be seen by the frequency with which he returns to the topic. And yet he did not thereby rise to the height which the New England divines had themselves already attained.

But certain of Ballou's fundamental assumptions appear also in these opening pages. He says:—

Now to reason justly, we must conclude that, if God possess infinite wisdom, he could never intend anything to take place or be, that will not take place or be; nor that which is or will be, not to be at the time when it is. And it must be considered erroneous to suppose that the Allwise ever desired anything to take place which by his wisdom he knew would not; as such a supposition must in effect suppose a degree of misery in the eternal mind equal to the strength of his fruitless desire!⁶⁴

The root of this conception, as we shall see, is a denial of all true freedom on the part of man, which makes God's will all in all, and leads to the express denial of those distinctions between the secret and revealed will of God which are introduced into Calvinistic systems to save human responsibility.⁶⁵

By a strange coincidence ideas also appear here as to the nature of evil which agree in form of expression strikingly with Samuel Hopkins. Ballou says: "If by the real evil be meant something that ought not to be in respect to all the consequences which attend it, I cannot admit of its existence."⁶⁶ He also maintains that "the consequences of an act do not determine whether the act be good or evil."⁶⁷

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 40. Cf. BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, Vol. xliii. pp. 8, 9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁵ *E. g.*, *ibid.*, p. 250.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-48.

Passing now from the nature of sin to its origin, Mr. Ballou refers the entire theory of the Fall to the "chimerical story of the bard Milton." Viewing the whole as an attempted explanation of the introduction of sin into the universe, Ballou propounds the crucial difficulty in saying that it does not account for the case of Satan himself. "Was not the angel holy in every faculty? Was not the command for him to worship the Son holy and just? All answer, Yes. Then from such causes, how was sin produced? The reader will easily see, the question cannot be answered."⁶⁸

Our author's own solution of the problem is as follows: God had a design in making us, the whole of which "must be carried into effect and nothing more, admitting him to be an infinite being."⁶⁹ Sin is therefore in the plan of God. To arrive at a satisfactory account of the entrance of evil into the world, we must begin with natural evil. This is a natural result of our physical organization. In the combination of the various elements entering into the composition of our bodies, there is provision for the rise of all manner of disorders. The same feature is found in our senses, which are at the same time the "origin of our thoughts and volitions." Hence physical evil is the source of moral evil. "Want unsatisfied is an evil; and unsatisfied want is the first movement to action or volition." Let now the element of confusion enter into our desires, and the introduction of sin is explained. "From our natural constitution, composed of our bodily elements, we are led to act in obedience to carnal appetites, which justifies the conclusion that sin is the work of the flesh." This language, derived from an earlier edition, conveys the thoughts of the later one before us in simpler form. Ballou subsequently clothed his theory in an expository form, but without much gain in clearness.⁷⁰

But, says the objector, this is to make God the author of

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-63.

sin. No, says Mr. Ballou, it is to make God the author of that which is in a limited sense sin.⁷¹

In this connection comes in the discussion of the freedom of the will. As Mr. Ballou's great doctrinal argument for universal salvation is that the plans of God will certainly be carried out, he is compelled from his standpoint to remove the objection that the will of man may interpose to persist in sin. He does it by denying that the will has freedom. "In order for a choice to take place, the mind must have the preception of two or more objects; and that object which has the most influence on the judgment and passions will be the chosen object; and choice in this instance has not even the shadow of liberty." Other expressions which he employs show that Mr. Ballou believes in strict determinism.⁷²

In treating of the consequences of sin, our writer rejects the doctrine that they are spiritual, temporal and eternal death. Temporal death is incidental to our constitution since we are by nature mortal. As for eternal death, the whole discussion pertains to this, but Mr. Ballou puts in a disclaimer here, that the effects of sin are limited to the state in which they are committed.⁷³

In treating the subject of the atonement, to which he now comes, Mr. Ballou transgresses the proprieties of a sober discussion by the bitterness of his expressions against Orthodox theories. Or, waiving this, he shows too little sympathy for, or understanding of, what his opponents meant to say, to inspire us with much confidence that he will contribute to the theme.⁷⁴ We shall not delay upon his criticisms of other theories, but shall content ourselves with reproducing Ballou's own. It is substantially as follows:—Jesus Christ was not God. To suppose this is to involve one's self in inextricable difficulties. "To say of two persons, exactly of the

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 64 ff.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 66, 71, especially 95 ff. See, also, *Select Sermons* (Boston, 1832), p. 306 ff.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103 ff.

same age, that one of them is a real son of the other, is to confound good sense." "If the Godhead consists of three distinct persons, and each of these persons be infinite, the whole Godhead amounts to the amazing sum of infinity multiplied by three."⁷⁵ It will be noted that it is necessary thus to diminish the dignity of Christ to establish the view of atonement which is to follow. The dissatisfied party needing reconciliation is man, not God.⁷⁶ The sin of Eden produced two errors in Adam's mind which have remained in the mind of man ever since. (a) He believed God to be his enemy. (b) He believed that he could reconcile his Maker by works which he could himself do. But on the contrary God loved Adam after his sin as much as before. He did not regard himself as the injured party, for the only party injured by the sin of man was man himself. His love for his Creator was interrupted, and his views of Him were corrupted. The atonement was necessary to renew man's love to God. God himself sought to effect this, and so the atonement did not *produce* love in God towards man, but was the result of that uninterrupted love. And so the atonement consists in manifesting God's love to us, and so in causing us to love him. The temporal death and the literal blood of Christ did not make the atonement. Apparently Mr. Ballou did not have any clear place for the death of Christ in his system.⁷⁷

Incidentally the writer has introduced a discussion at this point of endless punishment as the penalty of the law.⁷⁸ It is not necessary (a) to maintain the law and secure the government of God, since he is almighty. Nor (b) to reclaim the delinquent, for of course it is especially calculated not to reclaim him, since it is endless. Nor (c) is it necessary to deter others from crime, for through the sin of Adam the entire race would be involved in endless punishment, and there would be no one to deter. And (d) endless punish-

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 140 ff.

⁷⁷ *Comp. ibid.*, pp. 167, 233.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

ment involves endless sin ; but to inflict endless sin is against the law which requires endless holiness.

We now enter upon the closing portion of the work, the most important from the author's point of view,—the Consequences of the Atonement to mankind. These are, in general, the universal holiness and happiness of the race.

This statement has no sooner been made than the influences of Mr. Ballou's surroundings become evident in his pausing to discuss the supposition that eternal punishment is necessary to the greatest final amount of happiness. The speculations of the Hopkinsians were before his mind here, though the statements which Mr. Ballou makes of their positions are very objectionable. His great answer is derived from the conception that what is meant by these reasoners is that pain is an object of enjoyment in and of itself. We may therefore pass, without stopping on this topic, to the positive arguments which Mr. Ballou now begins to propose for universal salvation.

Certain objections are first noticed.⁷⁹ That derived from Rev. xiv. 10, 11, he answers by referring to the present time as the period of punishment. But it is objected that millions go out of this world unreconciled and therefore shall remain so to all eternity. But, says Ballou, this implies that there will be no change after death, and if this is so, saints will not increase in holiness, which is too absurd to need refutation. The answer to the objection from moral agency consists in repeating the denial of the freedom of the will.⁸⁰ Or, on the ground of the objector, which Ballou always tries to take, it gives men an opportunity of repentance and salvation, and thus is no obstacle to universal salvation. Again, the word "everlasting" does not mean endless. If the "day of judgment" of the Scriptures be an objection to universal salvation, the proper understanding according to Mr. Ballou, substantiated by a long exegetical discussion, is that the "coming of the Lord," and the "day of

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 187 ff. Formally from p. 193.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

judgment" were accomplished by the destruction of Jerusalem.⁸¹ The account of Dives and Lazarus is not literal. In Matt. xii. 31, 32 (neither in this world nor in that which is to come), "world" means dispensation; "this" world, the legal priestly dispensation, and "that which is to come" the gospel.⁸² And finally, Mr. Ballou thinks that endless misery demands a principle to support such misery, in the divine nature.⁸³

The treatise closes with the reasons for believing in universal salvation, and with them our review shall close. They open with the argument from the goodness of God, with which we are already familiar. Further arguments are:—⁸⁴ (a) There is an immortal desire in every soul for future existence and happiness. "Why should the Almighty implant this desire in us if he never intended to satisfy it?" (b) All wise, good, and exemplary men wish for the truth of the doctrine. "If it be God's spirit in us which causes us to pray for the destruction of sin, is it reasonable to say that this same spirit has determined that sin shall always exist?" (c) If any of the human race are endlessly miserable, the whole must be, provided they know it, on the principle of sympathy. (d) The world is a place of education. Sin is a mistake, and is it conceivable that men should never find this out, unless the school is to be a failure? (e) Mankind in their moral existence originated in God. They must finally be assimilated with the fountain from which they sprang. (f) Finally, the Scripture proof. This is to be of the plainest sort. "I am determined to admit no Scripture as evidence in this case that needs any interpretation to cause it to mean what I wish to prove; therefore I shall produce but a small part of the Scriptures which I conceive have a direct meaning in favor of Universalism." We are relieved by this fact from the necessity of entering into the discussion of the sep-

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 229 ff.

arate passages. The most obvious meaning which will tell in favor of the doctrine of Universalism is the one which Mr. Ballou has in mind. We therefore append a list of the passages and leave the reader to make the examination for himself.⁸⁵

Such was the work of Hosea Ballou. With him we may close our sketch of Universalist writers, and pass to the general discussion of the subject in which the New England divines now joined.

⁸⁵These occur upon p. 240 ff. They are:—Acts iii. 20, 21; Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10; Gen. xii. 3; xlix. 10; Ps. lxxii. 11; xxxvii. 10; xxii. 27; ii. 7, 8; Col. i. 19; Is. xxv. 6, 7, 8; 1 Cor. xv. 54; Rev. xxi. 4; Jer. xxxiii. 20; Ezek. xvii. 22-24; 1 Tim. ii. 4; Eph. i. 11. Specially 1 Cor. xv.; Rev. v. 11, 12, 13, 14; John v. 22, 23; Is. xlv. 22-25; Rom. viii. 22, 23; 2 Cor. v. 14.

[*To be concluded.*]